Diocese’s new Custos of Holy Relics shares enthusiasm for Church’s devotional life

Laura Keener

The Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption in Covington is home to one of the largest collections of relics in the United States. (See related story right). To care and safeguard this collection of over 300 first and second class relics, Bishop Roger Foys has appointed Father Jordan Hainsey to Custos of Holy Relics of the Diocese of Covington. Our diocesan heritage is quite unique and fascinating. It is relevant to our faith and our history. The Custos is a guardian keeper protector of the relics. It’s a position of incredible responsibility and privilege. It is a way to honor the saints who have gone before us and now enjoy eternal life with our God." The role of the Custos of Holy Relics is to protect the sacred relics and to cultivate the renewal of relic veneration in the devotional life of the Church. The Custos is also charged with expanding, growing and authenticating the relic collection. Holy relics are physical objects directly associated with the saints or with Christ. They are categorized into three classes: First class relics are the body or fragments of the body of a saint. Second class relics are something that a saint owned or used. Third class relics are items that a saint owned or used. Third class relics are the body or fragments of the body or items that a saint owned or used. They are categorized into three classes. First class relics are the body or fragments of the body of a saint. Second class relics are things that a saint owned or used. Third class relics are items that a saint owned or used.

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The Relic Collection of the Diocese of Covington
One of the largest holdings in the United States, the relic collection of the Diocese of Covington is comprised of over 300 Relics. With numerous relics authenticated by Covington’s first Bishop, George Aloysius Carrell, it was Covington’s third Bishop, Camillus Paul Maes, who documented the first relic inventory. The actual collection would expand into Europe, and eventually result in a small selection of relics displayed in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. Among the first reliquary collection to be seated in the Cathedral Basilica of Covington.

In 2021, the Relic Shrine of St. Paul will be installed in the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption. Housing the principal relic collection of the Diocese of Covington, Bishop Foys has continued the legacy of his episcopal predecessors, expanding the relic collection with the Church’s newest saints and blessed; some include: Pope St. John Paul II, St. Maximilian Kolbe, Bl. Solanus Casey, Bl. Stanley Rother, Bl. Miguel Pro, Bl. Carlo Acutis, St. Theresa of Calcutta, St. Damien of Molokai, Bl. Franz Jägerstätter, St. Oscar Romero, St. Katherine Drexel, Bl. Anna Maria Taigi, Bl. Celina Merloni, Bl. Francis Xavier Seelos, St. Elizabeth of the Trinity, Sts. Louis and Zelie Martin, St. Edith Stein, Bl. Mariam Teresa Demjanovich, and St. Conrad of Parzham.

In 2021, Bishop Foys appointed Father Jordan Hainsey, Ob.S.B., K.H.S., as the Custos of Holy Relics for the Diocese of Covington. His work is focused on caring for the relic collection and for promoting relic devotion in the Church.

A relic authenticate document by Bishop Camillus Paul Maes testifying to his deposit of sacred relics in one of the Cathedral Basilica altars.

(Continued on page 9)
2021 General Assembly passes victories for children—born and unborn—and more

**Messenger Staff Report**

The 2021 regular session of the Kentucky General Assembly ended with many positive changes to the law for which Catholic Conference of Kentucky and the broader Catholic community have long advocated.

“To everyone who wrote to or called your legislators over the past several months, thank you! You are a big part of these victories,” said Jason Hall, executive director, CCK. “The work of our bishops and CCK staff would never see this kind of success without the support of the broader Catholic community. May God bless you for your commitment to Faithful Citizenship.”

In an e-mail, Mr. Hall provided the following wrap-up of the session.

Two very important steps were taken on the issue of protecting unborn human life. First, SB 9, the Born Alive Infant Protection Act, was passed in the early days of session and became law. Then, at the end of session, HB 93 was passed, which will place a constitutional amendment on the ballot in the November 2021 election. If approved by the voters, the amendment will clarify that there is no right to abortion in the state Constitution and prevent a state-level Roe v. Wade. This will ensure that all of the pro-life bills that have passed in recent years, or that will be in the years to come, will not be struck down by state courts.

With the vote to override the veto of HB 563, education choice will soon be coming to Kentucky. Parents and educators have many questions about when this program will be available and how it will work. It will take at least a few months for the state to implement the program so that applications from parents can be submitted. We will be issuing alerts when that time arrives. In the meantime, the EdChoice KY coalition is updating its website to share educational information on the program. It currently has an e-mail sign-up page specifically for parents who want to receive updates about the program. More resources will be available in the coming weeks that will be helpful for both parents and school leaders.

About the passing of HB 563, the four bishops of Kentucky, including Bishop Roger Foys, said in a statement, “We applaud the Kentucky legislature for the passage of House Bill 563. This legislation provides more opportunities for parents with limited financial means to decide where their children will best thrive, whether in public or non-public schools. And, because of other forms of assistance in HB 563 that benefit children in public and non-public schools, it will serve students in need throughout the Commonwealth of Kentucky… There are countless stories of students whose lives have been changed for the better by the simple act of giving them the same choices already enjoyed by wealthy families. We are very grateful that Kentucky families in need now have more opportunities to benefit because of HB 563.”

Finally, there has been tremendous progress in the area of criminal justice reform. CCK is a founding member of the Kentucky Smart on Crime coalition, and has long worked toward improvements in our criminal justice system. This year saw the adoption of a long list of positive changes. Here are several that were supported by the coalition:

- SB 32 was amended to include SB 36, which CCK and Smart on Crime supported. This bill changes the law dealing with the automatic transfer of juveniles to adult court and restores many of those decisions to the discretion of the judge, based on the circumstances of the particular case. There are many advantages to this new approach, but in particular it will help address racial disparities. According to data from the Kentucky Administrative Office of the Courts, of 461 cases closed in 2020 in which juveniles were tried as adults, 53 percent of the defendants were Black, while only 8 percent of the state’s population is Black.
- HB 126, sponsored by Chairman C. Ed. Massey of Hebron, raises the felony theft threshold to $1,000. Kentucky’s threshold will now match neighbors West Virginia, Virginia, Tennessee, Missouri, and Ohio.
- HB 497 removes barriers to reentry for those exiting the corrections system. HB 497 tasks the Kentucky Department of Corrections with issuing certificates of employability to those who successfully complete programs while in incarceration. It will incentivize employers to hire the formerly incarcerated by providing liability protections. The bill further encourages other important reentry supports such as the issuance of IDs and better access to health care for people leaving incarceration.
- SB 80 better defines the law enforcement officer decertification process, protects law enforcement agencies by bringing transparency to prior misconduct by applicants, and requires an officer to intervene when another officer is engaging in the use of unlawful and unjustified excessive or deadly force.
- SB 4 significantly limits the use of no-knock search warrants. The legislation sets strict procedures and requirements for the issuance of warrants authorizing police entry without notice.
- SB 84 provides pregnant women in incarceration the necessary resources for a safe and healthy pregnancy. The bill forbids solitary confinement during pregnancy and a post-partum period, requires the Department of Corrections to provide more data on the use of solitary confinement, provides for six weeks of post-partum care, expands pregnancy medical release to include community-based treatment for substance use disorder, and ensures mothers have access to social workers for possible reunification after time served.

After signing HB 563, Michael Adams, Secretary of State, holds up the document that brings educational choice to Kentucky families. At the signing are (from left) Andrew Vandiver, associate director; Catholic Conference of Kentucky and his daughter; Charles Leis, president, EdChoice Kentucky; Mr. Adams; Akia McNeary Sullivan, parent from Florence, KY; and Rep. Chad McCoy, District 50.

Secretary of State Michael Adams signs House Bill 91, April 7, at the State Capitol, surrounded by pro-life advocates including (far right) Addia Wuchner, executive director, Kentucky Right to Life and (next to her) Jason Hall, executive director, Catholic Conference of Kentucky. The measure places a constitutional amendment on the November 2022 ballot for Kentuckians to decide whether abortion is a constitutional right.
Four Josephs: A parish’s patron saint

Father Jordan Hainsey
Messenger contributor

Every church to be dedicated has a patron saint, also known as a titular name. This custom dates back to the earliest days of the Church when house churches and basilicas alike grew up over the burial place of a particular saint or over a large holding of their relics.

Many of the Roman basilicas founded by Constantine, or erected throughout his lifetime, illustrate this practice; the churches of St. Peter (the Vatican), St. Paul Outside the Walls, St. Sebastian, and St. Agnes were all basilicas built over cemeteries where the bodies of each of these saints were buried. These were the sites of the faithful’s earliest devotions.

As the Church grew and expanded outward, the custom became codified with the patron of a Church being chosen by the people with the bishop (cf. Pope Urban VIII). The saint often reflected local custom, heritage, tradition, or a miraculous event (criteria still used). Titular names may be one of the persons of the Blessed Trinity, the Blessed Virgin Mary, the angels, or any canonized saint(s). The point is for the patron to bind and unite the faithful together within the sacred space where they celebrate divine worship.

While churches were long dedicated to St. Joseph as the Patron of the Universal Church, St. Joseph has been the most popular titular, with four churches dedicated to his patronage: St. Joseph Basilica; St. Joseph, Cold Spring; St. Joseph, Crescent Springs; and St. Joseph, Warsaw.

For these parishes, the Year of St. Joseph inaugurates a new moment for the faithful to get to know their parish patron. For the other parishes of the diocese, it marks a perfect opportunity to get to know the parish patron saint and their story. Whether it’s the young Roman martyr Cecilia, or the Anglo-Saxon King and Confessor, Edward, every saint has a story, and their example can unite us more to the Gospel message if we’re open to the saints’ transformative intercession.

Cathedral welcomes you
The Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption has reopened for visitors and private prayer.
The schedule is:
Monday through Friday, 9 a.m.–3 p.m.
Saturday, 10 a.m.–Mass at 4:30 p.m.
Sunday, 11 a.m.–Mass at 5:30 p.m.
Masks are required. Due to ongoing COVID-19 protocols, there will be no group tours.

Coronavirus Report
(as of Monday, April 12)
The information below includes reported cases from the Curia, schools, parishes, organizations and religious houses in the Diocese of Covington. There are over 8,000 students in diocesan schools, not including administrators, faculty and staff and hundreds of priests, employees and volunteers at the Curia and in parishes, organizations and religious houses.

Positive Cases
Active positive cases: 4
Recovered positive cases: 852
Total ever positive cases: 860
Currently Self-quarantined
Close Contacts: 4
Close Contacts with COVID case in household: 8

Official assignment
Effective March 25, 2021
Rev. Jordan M. Hainsey
To: Custos of the Holy Relics of the Diocese of Covington
Continues other duties
By order of the Most Rev. Roger J. Foys, D.D.
Bishop of the Diocese of Covington
Jamie N. Schroeder, Chancellor

April 17
Mass, Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption, Covington, 4:30 p.m.

April 18
Mass, Cathedral Basilica, 10 a.m.

April 19
Diocesan Building Commission meeting, 10 a.m.

April 20
COVID-19 briefing meeting, 9:30 a.m.

April 21
Individual meeting, 10 a.m.
Confirmation for Blessed Sacrament Parish, Cathedral Basilica, 7 p.m.

April 22
Individual meeting, 9 a.m.
Episcopal Council meeting, 9:30 a.m.
Confirmation for Blessed Sacrament Parish, Cathedral Basilica, 7 p.m.

April 23
COVID-19 briefing, 9:30 a.m.

April 24
Confirmation for Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, Cathedral Basilica, 10 a.m.
Mass, Cathedral Basilica, Covington, 4:30 p.m.

April 25
Mass, Cathedral Basilica, 10 a.m.
The **Cross — ‘For his mercy endures forever’** — Psalm 136

The “Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church” (2004) roots the Church’s moral teaching on social justice in a panoramic vision of salvation history. The first chapter — “God’s Plan of Love for Humanity” — traces the movement of the divine initiative in the divine history of salvation, which was inaugurated in creation, enacted historically in and through the biblical covenant, and decisively fulfilled in the Incarnation. The Compendium declares that the Incarnation is the Face of God, progressively revealed in the history of salvation, shines in its fullness in the Face of Jesus Christ crucified and risen from the dead. (CSDC, n. 31) Thus, the mystery of redemptive Incarnation is a revelation of Trinitarian love, for “God is an infinite communion of love.” A poignant passage recounts the core of salvation history: “God’s gratuitous love for humanity is revealed, before anything else, as love springing from the Father, from whom everything draws its source; as the free communication that the Son makes of this love, giving himself anew to the Father and giving himself to mankind; as the ever new fruitfulness of divine love that the Holy Spirit pours forth into the hearts of men (cf. Rom 8:26).” The summary concludes: “By his words and deeds, and fully and definitively by his death and resurrection, Jesus reveals to humanity that God’s love for us is all called by grace to become his children in the Spirit (cf. Rom 8:16; Gal 4:6), and therefore brothers and sisters among ourselves.” (CSDC, n. 31)

*Redeemer Hominis* (“Redeemer of Humanity,” 1979), St. John Paul II’s inaugural encyclical, articulated the all-encompassing vision which had dominated his pastoral teaching over the decades of his Petrine ministry: “The Redeemer of man, Jesus Christ, is the center of the universe and history.” (RH, n. 1)

The late Holy Father, inspired by a profound spiritual consciousness of the approaching Great Jubilee in 2000, called for a reawakening of the cornerstone article of Christian faith — the Incarnation. In particular, the Christology of the Gospel according to John grounds a New Testament foundation of the doctrine of the redemptive Incarnation. Two Johannine passages are seminal: “The Word became flesh and dwelt among us” (John 1:14) and “God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16).” (RH, n. 1)

*Redeemer Hominis* developed an extensive analysis of the multi-faceted dimensions of the mystery of the Incarnation and Redemption. The mystery of Redemption is marked by both the divine and human dimension. (RH, nn. 9-10)

First, the redemptive death and resurrection of Jesus Christ — the paschal mystery — inaugurates the new creation, a restoration of the visible world to “its original beauty, a sphere of love and wisdom.” (RH, n. 8) The encyclical explains: “The God of creation is revealed as the God of redemption, as the God who is faithful to himself, and faithful to his love for man and the world which he revealed on the day of creation.” (RH, n. 9)

*Redeemer Hominis* cited “Gaudium et Spes,” the “Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World” (1965), in support of the vision of salvation history. This first chapter — “God’s Plan of Love for Humanity” — traces the movement of the divine initiative in the divine history of salvation, which was inaugurated in creation, enacted historically in and through the biblical covenant, and decisively fulfilled in the Incarnation. The Compendium declares that the Incarnation is the Face of God, progressively revealed in the history of salvation, shines in its fullness in the Face of Jesus Christ crucified and risen from the dead. (CSDC, n. 31) Thus, the mystery of redemptive Incarnation is a revelation of Trinitarian love, for “God is an infinite communion of love.” A poignant passage recounts the core of salvation history: “God’s gratuitous love for humanity is revealed, before anything else, as love springing from the Father, from whom everything draws its source; as the free communication that the Son makes of this love, giving himself anew to the Father and giving himself to mankind; as the ever new fruitfulness of divine love that the Holy Spirit pours forth into the hearts of men (cf. Rom 8:26).” The summary concludes: “By his words and deeds, and fully and definitively by his death and resurrection, Jesus reveals to humanity that God’s love for us is all called by grace to become his children in the Spirit (cf. Rom 8:16; Gal 4:6), and therefore brothers and sisters among ourselves.” (CSDC, n. 31)

The historical condition, therefore, becomes “precisely the mode and sphere in which love manifests itself that in biblical language is called ‘mercy.’” (DHM, n. 3)

Christ, the Incarnate Word, reveals God who “is Father, who is love,” as St. John will express it in his first letter (1 John 4:10). Christ reveals God as ‘rich in mercy’ as promised in St. Paul (Eph 2:2).” (DM, n. 3)

The celebration of the mystery of the Incarnation during the preparatory period for the Jubilee entails fixing “our gaze on the mystery of the Trinity” for “the journey of faith has its origin and its final goal, when at last our eyes will contemplate the face of God forever.”

St. John Paul II explained: “Jesus of Nazareth, who reveals the Father, has fulfilled the desire hidden in every human heart to know God.” The Holy Father continues the reflection: “Jesus reveals the face of God the Father ‘compassionate merciful’ (James 5:11), and with the sending of the Holy Spirit he makes known the mystery of love which is the Trinity,” (DHM, n. 3)

The opening line of *Misericordiae Vultus* (“The Face of Mercy”), the papal bull announcing the 2015 Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy, synthesizes the Christological theme of the Jubilee: “Jesus Christ is the face of the Father’s mercy.” (MV, n. 1)

Consistent with that theme, Pope Francis stresses that the Gospel of Matthew narrates the account of the institution of the Eucharist in a context of mercy for Jesus “placed his supreme act in the light of his mercy.”

In addition, the Holy Father notes that prior to the Passion, Jesus prayed Psalm 136 — “For his mercy endures forever.” Jesus underwent his passion and resurrection aware of the “great depth of love that he would consummate on the Cross.” (MV, n. 7)

Earlier, in the apostolic exhortation *Ecclesia in Intermissing* (“The Joy of the Gospel”), the Holy Fatherdefined the Gospel as：not merely the account of salvation, but the all-embracing Gospel that ‘what shines forth is the beauty of the saving love of God made manifest in Jesus Christ who died and rose from the dead.” (EH, n. 36)

Mgr. Ronald Ketterle is director of eccumenism, episcopal liaison to the Messenger and professor of theology at Thomas More University.
Repentance is always in season

The readings for the third Sunday of Easter are:

There is something that seems at first a little odd about the readings for this Sunday. At the end of the first reading we hear Peter exhort the people: “Repent, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be wiped away.” In the second reading we hear from St. John: “My children, I am writing this to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin …” Finally, in the Gospel we hear Jesus tell the two disciples: “Thus it is written that the Christ would suffer and rise from the dead on the third day and that repentance, for the forgiveness of sins, would be preached in his name to all the nations … Why all this focus on sin and repentance in the Easter season? Is this not a Lenten theme?

This is not to play the Lenten season against the Easter season, or to suggest that the Lenten season is not important; it is, after all, a Lenten theme? The readings today remind us that our personal battle with the graces that flow from the cross and Jesus’ Passion and death brought to us — among other things, mercy and forgiveness. Let us make Jesus’ Easter victory our own. Let us use it, any time, and all times, of the year. Let us make Jesus’ Easter victory our own. Let us use it, any time, and all times, of the year.

Rebuilding the answer . Getting to the bottom of what is truth …

Evil still exists, as does sin …” Finally, in the Gospel, Jesus tells the disciples: “Thus it is written that the Christ would suffer and rise from the dead and that repentance, for the forgiveness of sins, would be preached in his name to all the nations … Why all this focus on sin and repentance in the Easter season? Is this not a Lenten theme?

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Father Stephen Bankemper

Go and Glorify

George Weigel

God’s harsh and dreadful love

The Paschal Triduum this year seemed like a return from exile: Holy Thursday’s Evening Mass of the Lord’s Supper; in church; Good Friday’s Commemoration of the Lord’s Passion, in church; Saturday evening’s Easter Vigil, in church — what a blessing. Thanking God, I could only be aware of those for whom the exile continues, whether because of the pandemic or, like my friend Jimmy Lai, because of unjust imprisonment for the cause of Christ and freedom in Hong Kong. May their exile end soon.

In his 2010 Easter message, Pope Benedict XVI noted that the “new passover” Christians celebrate at Easter — the passing over of the Lord Jesus from death to a superabundant form of life — replicates in important respects the form of Israel’s Passover, which the Church remembers at the Easter Vigil by reading Exodus 13:15-15:1.

Yes, Easter changed everything, in that it revealed in a definitive way a virtual reality other than actuality “in the beginning” (Genesis 1:1) — and nothing could be the same after that revelation of the power of love. Still, Benedict taught, it’s important to remember that “Easter does not work magic. Just as the Israelites found the desert awaiting them on the far side of the Red Sea, so the Church, after the Resurrection, always finds history filled with joy and hope, grief and anguish. And yet this history is changed, it is marked by a new and eternal covenant, it is truly open to the future.”

That is why, the pope concluded, the people of the Church, having met the Risen Lord, can continue their pilgrimage of conversion and mission with confidence and hope. Because of Easter, Christians are the people who know how the world’s story will turn out — not in cosmic entropy, but in the Wedding Feast of the Lamb who was slain, as the Church is reminded as it reads the Book of Revelation during Eastertide. Knowing that, the Church carries the life-transforming message of the Risen Lord into the future, singing (as Pope Benedict put it), “the song that is ever ancient and yet ever new: ‘Let us sing to the Lord, glorious his triumph!’”

It will be well to keep that Easter confidence and hope in mind if, as may be happening, Catholicism is entering a new “Humanum Vitae moment” — a moment in which public dissent from authoritative teaching about ancient and orthodox Catholic truth tears new wounds in the Mystical Body of Christ.

This is not, I hope, and there are differences between this Catholic moment and that one. In 1968, dissenting bishops and theologians said, more or less openly, that Paul VI got it wrong theologically in affirming the Church’s ethic of human love: that the natural rhythms of biology are the morally appropriate way to regulate fertility.

In 2021, dissenting bishops and theologians are claiming that the re-affirmation of the obvious by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith — that the Church cannot bless same-sex unions liturgically because those relationships are “intrinsically disordered” (as the Catechism puts it) — is insensitive, inhospitable, hurtful, coldly abstract. That the CDF got it wrong is the subtext of dissent; but dissent was primarily expressed in psychological rather than theological categories, not least by bishops in countries where such “blessings” are performed.

This is not an improvement.

Pondering the assault on CDF and the new typical confirmations that ensued when various Vatican commentators tried to walk back the papal endorsement of the congregation’s directives, Pope Benedict XVI seemed to have been on the side of the angels. Catholicism seems to have forgotten Dorothy Day’s claim that divine love is “a harsh and dreadful thing compared to love in dreams.” I was also reminded of a passage from a letter that Flannery O’Connor wrote to her friend Betty Heaster in 1956.

The truth does not change according to our ability to stomach it emotionally … (Thus) there are long periods in the lives of all of us, and of the saints, when the truth as revealed by faith is hideous, emotionally disturbing, downright repulsive. Witness the dark night of the soul in individual saints. Right now the whole world seems to be going through a dark night of the soul.

That the journey to Easter always passes through Good Friday is an annual reminder that the divine love burning its way through history is harsh and dreadful as well as compassionate and merciful. Laying our grasp on what Dorothy Day and Flannery O’Connor understood reduces Christianity to sentimentality That is why all of us, sinner as we are, must pray daily, “Lord, have mercy!”

George Weigel is a senior fellow of the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, D.C.

Stand in truth, render justice

This winter I have had the pleasure of speaking to all the diocesan high school seniors during their senior retreat at St. Anne Retreat Center. It has been a joyful experience and a wonderful learning opportunity for me.

One of the first messages I try to convey to these young adults is the importance of seeking out the truth in today’s world. I tell them it is okay to ask questions, any question, as long as we are willing to put in the time, do the work, to get to an honest answer. Getting to the truth of a matter has always been a challenging prospect (remember Pontius Pilate’s question to Jesus: “What is truth?” [Jn 18:38]), but imagine what it is like growing up in the age of the internet and a 24-hour “news” cycle!

Youth are constantly bombarded with messages, coming from them from every angle. They have too little time to think about how much information every day be it from social media, Netflix, friends, textbooks and, unfortunately, adults who seem to be more interested in indoctrination rather than teaching critical thinking. Most young people these days carry around little computers in their pocket, and spend more time in virtual reality rather than actual reality. And, as they grow up in a secular culture, guess who is usually left out of the picture or at least put on the back burner.

One of the hallmarks of the Judeo-Christian world view is God that speaks to us. We don’t hear a voice coming down from the clouds (usually), but he speaks to us through the liturgy through the Scriptures, through prayer, through events and through other people. God reveals himself to us in more ways than we can even imagine. I guess you could say that there are ordinary means by which he reveals himself as well as extraordinary means. But, of course, it’s all extraordinar y; we simply just get used to some things and take them for granted. But, for those who practice gratitude, the art of paying attention every day, the world is full of wonderment and there is still a small voice in the midst of the turbulent storm of modern life.

It is possible for God to speak to us in non-subtle ways.

On March 36 of this year archeologists announced an incredible discovery in the Judean desert. During an excavation approximately 90 new Dead Sea Scroll fragments were found. These are the first ancient biblical texts to be found in 60 years!

The Dead Sea Scrolls, first unearthed in the immediate aftermath of World War II in the caves near Qumran on the northern shore of the Dead Sea in the West Bank, are ancient Jewish and Hebrew religious manuscripts that contain some of the earliest known Hebrew religious documents, including biblical texts. Scholarly consensus dates the various scrolls from the last three centuries B.C. and the first century A.D. Most of a passage were found believed to have been hidden during a Jewish revolt against Rome nearly 1,900 years ago.

Think about that. These precious texts were hidden somewhere between the years 132 and 136 A.D. and waited, preserved in a very dark dry place, until they were uncovered this year.

Unlike the Dead Sea Scrolls, which were written in Hebrew and Aramaic, these newest fragments contain Greek letters. Scholars have determined that they come from a Greek translation of the book of the Twelve in Hebrew — what we call the Minor Prophets.

This extraordinary discovery would have been mind-blowing no matter what. However, I was impacted on a completely different and unexpected level when I heard the interpretation of verses found of the largest fragment.

They are from the prophet Zechariah and state:

“These are the things you are to do: Speak the truth to one another; render true justice in your gates. And do not contrive evil against one another, and do not speak a slanderous word against your brother.”

David Cooley

(Continued on page 15)
Growing the Pro-Life presence at Thomas More University

Saints for Life is the pro-life club at Thomas More University and was started in 2014. Its mission is to ‘promote, celebrate and defend a culture of life that respects the dignity of the human person from conception to natural death.’

College-age students are a major target of the abortion industry, so it is important for universities to provide a platform for pro-life students to express and act on their beliefs. Historically, social movements in the U.S. have relied on young people to face challenges with passion, idealism and courage, and Saints for Life is a way for students to engage with their peers and community about the value of human life. Like other pro-life student groups, Saints for Life meets some opposition from its peers. But Saints for Life has a special advantage in being at a Catholic university and having diocesan support.

When the pandemic closed campus in spring 2020, Saints for Life activities locked down, too. But the group kept meeting over the summer and are now growing again and expanding its outreach. Several returning seniors, plus new communications coordinators Amber Konerman, have made a big difference. Professor Caitlin Dwyer also joined the team as primary advisor, along with the director of Campus Ministry, Andrew Cole, and Professor Larry Klein from the Political Science Department. The students are grateful for their perspective and support.

The 2020–2021 academic year brought good changes and new efforts — a transition in leadership, recruitment of new members, a table for National Pro-Life Cupcake Day hosting a Christmas Baby Item Drive with Cincinnati Pregnancy Center West and creating resource packets with the New Hope Center for distribution to life coaches. To help spread its message to the Thomas More community, Saints for Life created Instagram and Twitter accounts. Also, pro-life faculty members and staff have been invited to speak at monthly meetings, thus building closer relationships with them. The group hosted apologetics training via Zoom with Students for Life of America, to equip students to talk about pro-life issues.

Even with masks and social distancing, Saints for Life kept visible in positive ways. In January, its leadership team attended the diocesan Pro-Life Mass at the Basilica Cathedral of the Assumption as well as Cincinnati Right to Life’s March for Life. The group hosted a pro-life Mass at the Basilica Cathedral of the Assumption as well as Cincinnati Right to Life’s March for Life outside the Auburn Avenue Planned Parenthood building. On the anniversary of Roe v. Wade, Saints for Life hosted a pro-life Mass celebrating the life and dignity of every human person on campus. During Lent, the Cemetery of the Innocents display could be seen by both the Crestview Hills and Thomas More communities. The summer before my first year at Thomas More, the Saints for Life leadership team reached out to recruit me. They needed a club secretary and needed communication outside the club, too. We started Twitter and Instagram accounts, an online presence that expands our presence and influence on campus. Some of our posts have drawn negative comments, but that just means people are paying attention. When people start thinking harder about pro-life truths it’s a positive.

One thing I learned as a young Catholic was always to speak the truth in love, and being pro-life on social media gives plenty of opportunities. Here at Thomas More I am glad it is a Catholic university, where pro-life students can speak the truth without fear.

Grace Brogan is president and Amber Konerman is communications coordinator for the Thomas More University Pro-Life Club.

Members of the Thomas More University Saints for Life Pro-Life Club handing out cupcakes during its annual SFL Cupcake Day in Seiler Commons.

Amber’s perspective

The definition of life has never been hard for me to understand. Growing up in the Catholic Church and attending Catholic school reaffirmed my reverence for life, and my pro-life views were uncontested. Once I became a teenager, started high school and created my first social media accounts, I saw a new side of the world. Social media opened a window of opportunity and opposition.

I knew that sometimes my views and opinions would be unpopular, however social media helped me find many like-minded individuals who were proud warriors for life. With that, I also encountered people who were pro-abortion. Once, when I posted a pro-life quote on Instagram, within seconds a backlash hit. The displeasure, anger and agitation shocked me, but that opposition also empowered me to become more outspoken on my pro-life views.

The summer before my first year at Thomas More, the Saints for Life leadership team reached out to recruit me. They needed a club secretary and needed communication outside the club, too. We started Twitter and Instagram accounts, an online presence that expands our presence and influence on campus. Some of our posts have drawn negative comments, but that just means people are paying attention. When people start thinking harder about pro-life truths it’s a positive.

One thing I learned as a young Catholic was always to speak the truth in love, and being pro-life on social media gives plenty of opportunities. Here at Thomas More I am glad it is a Catholic university, where pro-life students can speak the truth without fear.

Grace Brogan is president and Amber Konerman is communications coordinator for the Thomas More University Pro-Life Club.

Don’t let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity. — 1 Timothy 4:12

How can a young person stay on the path of purity? By living according to your word. — Psalm 119:9

For more information about the Pro-Life Office or to be added to our e-mail newsgroups, visit us online at www.covdio.org/prolife/ or call (859) 392-1500.
Saints accompany, intercede for Christians in prayer, pope says

Juno Arocho Esteves
Catholic News Service

Christians are never alone in prayer but instead are accompanied by countless saints who have preceded them, Pope Francis said.

“When men or women open their hearts to God, they will always be in the company of anonymous and recognized saints who pray with us and who intercede for us as older brothers and sisters who have preceded us on this same human adventure,” the pope said April 7 during his weekly general audience.

Continuing his series of talks on prayer, the pope reflected on the connection between prayer and the communion of saints who are “not far from us” and are a reminder of Jesus Christ because they have also “walked the path of life” as Christians.

“In the Church, there is no mourning that remains solitary, no tear that is shed in oblivion, because everything breathes and participates in a common grace,” he said.

The tradition of having graveyards around churches is a sign of that sharing, he said. It is as if to say that every Eucharist is attended in some way by those who have preceded us. There are our parents and grandparents, our godfathers and godmothers, our catechists and other educators, who have not only transmitted faith but also “the way of praying.”

The saints, he explained, are “witnesses that we do not adore — that is understood, we do not worship these saints — but whom we venerate and who in thousands of different ways bring us to Jesus Christ, the only Lord and mediator between God and human beings.”

Departing from his prepared remarks, the pope said the lives of saints also serve as a reminder that “even in our lives, though weak and marked by sin, holiness can blossom.”

“In the Gospels, we read that the first ‘canonized’ saint was a thief and he was ‘canonized’ not by a pope, but by Jesus himself,” he said. “Holiness is a path of life, of encounter and lead a life of holiness,” he said.

Pope Francis leads his general audience in the library of the Apostolic Palace at the Vatican April 7, 2021. The pope said Christians are never alone in prayer but instead are accompanied by countless saints who have preceded them.

NOVENA TO ST. EXPEDITE

Our dear martyr and protector,

St. Expedite, You who know what is necessary and what is urgently needed. I beg you to intercede before the Holy Trinity, that by your grace my request will be granted. (express request)

May I receive your blessing and favors. In the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. 3x Our Father, 3x Hail Mary, 3x Glory Be.

NOVENA TO THE SACRED HEART

May the Sacred Heart of Jesus be adored, glorified; loved and preserved throughout the world now and forever. Sacred Heart of Jesus pray for us St. Jude, worker of miracles, pray for us. Say this prayer 5 times a day. By the 8th day your prayers will be answered. Say it for 9 days. Thank you St. Jude. Amen. B.W.

NOVENA TO THE SACRED HEART

May the Sacred Heart of Jesus be adored, glorified; loved and preserved throughout the world now and forever. Sacred Heart of Jesus pray for us St. Jude, worker of miracles, pray for us. Say this prayer 5 times a day. By the 8th day your prayers will be answered. Say it for 9 days. Thank you St. Jude. Amen. M.M.R.
The Newport Central Catholic Drama Club presents “The Man Who Came to Dinner,” a farcical comedy, April 23, 24 and 25. The Gala Performance will be Friday, April 23. For more details visit www.NCCGala21.com. Other performances will be Saturday, April 24, 2 and 7 p.m.; Sunday, April 25, 2 and 7 p.m. To purchase tickets visit https://www.showtix4u.com. Capacity is limited. Masks are required and social distancing guidelines will be followed.

The Daughters of the American Revolution Essay Contest winners

(left) This year marked the 250th anniversary of the Boston Massacre. Students at St. Patrick School, Maysville, wrote essays imagining they were living in Boston at the time of the massacre, describing the event from the viewpoint of an eyewitness. Winning essays were submitted to The Daughters of the American Revolution Essay Contest. The essay written by Brynlee Robinson, a fifth grader, went on to become a State winner. Other grade level winners are: 5th grade (pictured) — 1st, Brynlee Robinson; 2nd, Kenzie Lewis; 3rd, Savannah Tucker; 6th grade — 1st, Asa Porter; 2nd, Hope Comer; 3rd, Denton Haerdrig; 7th grade — 1st, Jada Dickson; 2nd, Annie Corlis; 3rd, Joshua Berry and 8th grade — 1st, Kade Bond; 2nd, Ethan Klee; 3rd, Bri Riner.
Custos of Holy Relics
(Continued from page 1)

Cathedral interior schema. Double-sided with a nave facing screen, the new altar will be seamlessly integrated and maintain the focus of the altar of sacrifice at the center of the sanctuary.

The restored St. Ursula and Companions Skull relics and reliquary boxes obtained from Cologne by Bishop Camillus Paul Maes are the heart of the Diocese of Covington’s relic holdings.

Relics are grounded in the historical; a “yes” that this person lived and died. They are also beautiful. Centuries of artisans and an entire medieval guild of goldsmiths obsessed over how saints’ relics would be encased. The point was to evoke the transcendent quality of beauty. And finally they are grounded in faith; they are objects of devotion. They help draw one into contemplation.

Why venerate relics? Why is venerating relics not idolatry?

The veneration of saints is one of the oldest traditions in the Church with roots dating back to Jesus himself. In Luke, a woman is healed by touching the hem of Jesus’ garment. In Acts, people are healed by Peter’s shadow. Later, when persecutions arose and the bodies of martyrs were buried, cemeteries and the graves of martyrs became a touchpoint of faith. Pilgrims would flock to their tombs and celebrate holy Mass, light candles, and beg for the saints’ intercession. Relics, for the early Christians, and indeed ourselves, give credence to the incarnational reality and the beauty of our soul/body composite. Unlike the Eucharist which we adore, relics are only venerated and never worshipped; they’re respected and given profound reverence. As such, they are enshrined in altar stones, under altars, and in displays above them. They are a conduit through which we can experience the intercession of saints before God’s throne. Why is it recommended to learn more about the saint whose relic is being venerated?

Just like any church’s stained glass windows or decorative art, the purpose of relics is to catechize. And the relics of saints should do that. It should lead us to contemplate their life, to learn from their example, and to be better Christians.

The Venerable Fulton Sheen once said the Gospel message lives between two imperatives — to come, and to go. Jesus constantly invited people to come and listen to his teaching. After the Resurrection through the command is to go — to share, to teach. This is what relic devotion should do; it should invite us to come to the saints, but to then go sharing their story and incorporating their witness in our lives.

Should the faithful be concerned about the authenticity of a relic?

The Church takes the utmost care to ensure the authenticity of every relic. In days gone by relics were sometimes forged for the sake of profit and sadly this practice has crept into the 21st century. Given their precious and inestimable value, relics are never to be sold. That is why the Church, through the Congregation of the Causes of Saints and various postulatures, works to ensure that every relic has a documented provenance. This may be the relic’s authentic papers, the wax seal on the relic, and by corroborating documents and histories. To ensure against such forgeries, the Church stipulates that any relic exposed for veneration must have its wax seal intact and an accompanying authenticate document. Do you have any immediate plans for promoting the relics in the Diocese of Covington?

My hope as the Custos of Holy Relics is to reinvigorate this ancient tradition in our local Church of Covington. Following the Second Vatican Council, many traditions and devotions in the Church suffered, fell into disuse, or were simply forgotten. For many Catholics, relics are something new. Something they haven’t seen or in some way previously viewed macabre. It is my hope as Custos that I can promote these relics and their devotion, and that they can catechize and become a conduit for the experience of faith and evangelization in the Church today.
Holy Week 2021 celebrated with renewed joy, love and appreciation

Laura Keener

The sacred Triduum, the three days leading up to Easter — Holy Thursday, Good Friday and the Easter Vigil — are the three holiest days of the year. It is time for Christians to walk with Jesus through his passion, death and resurrection — the Paschal Mystery.

“By gathering this evening to celebrate the Mass of the Holy Thursday, we commemorate the institution of the Eucharist and the priesthood,” said Bishop Foys during his homily on Holy Thursday at the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption. “What we celebrate is exceptionally important. Today we celebrate the institution of two sacraments — that of the Holy Eucharist and that of the priesthood.”

Bishop Foys recalled that last year Holy Week was celebrated by priests in empty churches. Due to the pandemic, almost all Masses throughout the world were celebrated in the absence of the faithful. However, Bishop Foys said, “The Paschal Mystery is the fulness of Christ's sacrifice. This is the very source of all the grace that we receive and a moment in which we are renewed. That is why the celebration of Holy Thursday, Friday and Saturday is so important.”

The Paschal Mystery unfolds in its fulness every time Mass is celebrated, and nowhere throughout the world have we heard of tens of thousands of Masses offered — grace pouring into human hearts, the grace of God pouring into the world. Think how much worse things would be if Mass was ceased. A terrible thought, really.

“Today the celebration of the Mass throughout the entire world has ceased for just one day — Good Friday when Jesus was crucified. By our example and reverence of all things holy, lead others to appreciate for the Holy Eucharist … On this night, the Church welcomes 78 new members of the Catholic Church. Father Maher lights the Easter fire and Bishop Foys proclaims, “May the Holy Father, living wasmance of great joy for the blessing of Ashes.” Shining the Paschal Candle at the Cathedral, five people were received in full communion with the Church — three were baptized and two made a profession of faith — all received the sacrament of Confirmation. At Easter Vigil in parishes throughout the diocese, the Church welcomed 78 new members.

This night is marked different than any other night. The Lord Jesus, the Son of God, became one of us, not for his sake but for our sake — to conquer sin and death once and for all. That’s what makes this celebration so wonderful; it is a celebration of light, it is a celebration of new birth, it is a celebration of our liberty it is a celebration of our Lord. This is the faith that makes us strong. This is the faith that gives us light. This is the only faith that makes us rise again to life with him.”

Because once we were slaves but are slaves no longer, said Bishop Foys as he began his homily, “I know that from the dialogue of Passover.”

Passover is a Jewish holiday commemorating the deliverance of the Hebrews from slavery in Egypt.

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Passover is a Jewish holiday commemorating the delivery of the Hebrews from slavery in Egypt.
Christ’s victory over death proclaims a second chance for all, pope says

Juno Arocho Esteves and Cindy Wooden
Catholic News Service

The Easter festivals— with the fire, sharing of light from the paschal candle, the renewal of baptismal promises and the proclamation that Jesus has risen — assure people that it is never too late to start again, Pope Francis said.

“It is always possible to begin anew, because there is a new life that God can awaken in us in spite of all our failures,” the pope said April 3 during his celebration of the Easter Vigil.

With Italy in lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Pope Francis celebrated a pared-down vigil at the Altar of the Chair in St. Peter’s Basilica with an estimated 200 people present and returned the next morning with a similarly small congregation for Easter Mass and to give his blessing “urbi et orbi” (to the city and the world).

The vigil was simpler than usual, but there still was the blessing of the fire, which blazed at the foot of the basilica’s main altar, and the lighting of the Easter candle. Then, the darkened basilica slowly began to glow with the light of candles being shared by the concelebrants and the faithful present.

In his homily at the vigil, the pope said the Gospel proclamation of the Resurrection and the angel’s invitation to the women at Jesus’ tomb to “go to Galilee” was a call to return to “the place where the Lord first sought them out and called them to follow him.”

“The Risen Lord is asking his disciples to go there even now, to the settings of daily life, the streets we travel every day,” the pope said.

“Let us go to Galilee, then, to discover that God cannot be disappointed.”

In his homily, Pope Francis urged people to overcome barriers, banish prejudices and to recognize the Lord “here in our Galilees, in everyday life.”

“The Easter message does not offer us a mirage or reveal a magic formula,” the pope said before giving the blessing. “It does not joint to an escape from the difficult situation we are experiencing. The pandemic is still spreading, while the social and economic crisis remains severe, especially for the poor.”

The pope offered prayers for the sick and those who have died of COVID-19 and for the doctors and nurses who have made “valiant efforts” to care for the pandemic’s victims.

And he had special words of Easter hope for young people struggling in isolation from their friends.

“Experiencing real human relationships, not just virtual relationships, is something that everyone needs, especially at an age when a person’s character and personality is being formed,” he said.

“I express my closeness to young people throughout the world and, in these days, especially to the young people of Myanmar committed to supporting democracy and making their voices heard peacefully, in the knowledge that hatred can be dispelled only by love,” he said.

Pope Francis prayed for many places in the world where the need to fight the pandemic has not silenced the weapons of war and violence.

“This is scandalous,” he said. “Armed conflicts have not ended and military arsenals are being strengthened.”

The Gospel witnesses to the Resurrection, he said, “report an important detail: the risen Jesus bears the marks of the wounds in his hands, feet and side. These wounds are the everlasting seal of his love for us. All those who experience a painful trial in body or spirit can find refuge in these wounds and, through them, receive the grace of the hope that does not disappoint.”

“May the light of the risen Jesus be a source of rebirth for migrants fleeing from war and extreme poverty,” he prayed.

“This is scandalous,” he said. “Let us recognize in their pain and suffering the face of the Lord as he walked the path to Calvary. May they never lack concrete signs of solidarity and human fraternity, a pledge of the victory of life over death that we celebrate on this day.”

“We pray that all restrictions on freedom of worship and religion worldwide may be lifted and everyone be allowed to pray and praise God freely,” he said.

Calling again for a fair and speedy distribution of COVID-19 vaccines, the pope said that “in embracing the cross, Jesus bestowed meaning on our sufferings, and now we pray that the benefits of that healing will spread throughout the world.”

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**CAFETERIA STAFF**
Various schools in the Diocese of Covington currently have openings for full-time, part-time and substitute workers. Hours would occur during the school day. Duties include food preparation, serving and general cleanup. Interested individuals may contact Jackie Kaiser at jkaiser@covdio.org, or call her at 859/392-1536.

**EDITORIAL ASSISTANT WANTED**
The Messenger, is seeking a part-time Editorial Assistant to assist its editorial staff in creating a quality, weekly Catholic newspaper and maintaining an organized work environment. The Editorial Assistant helps update the diocesan database (Camino) and creates the weekly mailing list for the Messenger. The position requires an understanding of or aptitude for U.S. postal bulk-mail regulations. The Editorial Assistantproofs each edition of the Messenger, maintains the office archives, prepares invoices for payment and assists editorial staff, when needed, with writing/photography assignments. The qualified candidate will be a practicing Roman Catholic and will be comfortable with Excel and Word (or comparable) office software with a solid foundation in writing skills and the ability to meet deadlines. Anticipated start date: June 2021. Interested candidates may submit a resume or C-V and appropriate writing samples to Stephen Koplyay by email: skoplyay@covdio.org. (859) 392-1500.

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**ELEMENTARY PRINCIPAL**
St. Catherine of Siena parish in Ft. Thomas, Ky. (www.stcatherinesiena.org) seeks a dynamic principal for our school (K-8) of 150 children. The school is an integral part of our parish, and our parish permeates the school. We are committed first to helping our parents raise their children in the practice of the faith, by teaching the objective elements of the faith and fostering the subjective elements: helping them to grow closer to Christ and to be His witnesses in the world by word and service. We are committed to the development of the whole person: spiritual, intellectual, emotional, physical and social. St. Catherine of Siena is a sought-after school with a talented and committed staff with a wide range of experience, and the parents of our children are engaged and enthusiastic. The successful candidate will be a practicing Catholic in good standing with the Church and supportive of her teaching and mission. She or he will hold or be eligible for Kentucky principal certification. We prefer a candidate with at least three successful years as a classroom teacher and experience in Catholic school administration, but are willing to consider giving a chance to someone with potential. Interested individuals should send at least a resume or CV along with a cover letter and references to Stephen Koplyay, at skoplyay@covdio.org, fax 859/392-1589 or mail to 1125 Madison Avenue, Covington, KY 41011-3115.

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**VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR**
The Diocese of Covington's Catholic Charities is seeking to hire a full-time (40 hours a week, M-F) Volunteer Coordinator. The Volunteer Coordinator is involved with all aspects of volunteer recruitment, training, appreciation, and retention. The Coordinator identifies, engages, cultivates, and maintains volunteer relationships so that volunteers have positive and meaningful experiences. Our ideal candidate will be a practicing Roman Catholic in good standing with the Church, with a Bachelor's degree or the equivalent in a business or human services field, plus prior experience in program management. Other desired qualifications include experience with community outreach; demonstrated communication, organization, and human relations skills; and a familiarity with MS Office and general database software. Salary and benefits are competitive. To apply, or to nominate a candidate, email or fax a letter of interest, C-V or comprehensive resume with compensation history, and a minimum of five references with their contact e-mail addresses to Stephen Koplyay, SPHR at skoplyay@covdio.org, fax 859/392-1589.

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   Our Front Desk Volunteers are the face of Be Concerned. We are looking for volunteers who would be comfortable engaging with our customers as they visit Be Concerned. The volunteer position is a critical role that ensures our organization runs smoothly during business hours. We are looking for some consistent volunteer help with customer service, front desk support and administrative responsibilities. We have several days and times available, allowing you to select a time that works with your schedule.
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   We are seeing an increased need to deliver our supplemental groceries to homes. We are looking for volunteers to select grocery items from a menu, pack and deliver the items to homebound individuals on a monthly basis. This requires a valid driver’s license, background check and an ability to lift up to 15 lbs. Please email info@beconcerned.org or for additional information.

**CUSTODIAN NEEDED**
St. Catherine of Siena Parish in Fort Thomas is looking for a full-time custodian. Duties would include all normal cleaning that is involved with a school and a church as well as light maintenance as needed. Hours during the school year are second shift and an early first shift during the summer. Applicants must pass a background check and have or obtain Virtus certification. Please send resume to dikramer@stcatherinesiena.org or apply in person at the Parish Office.

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Stand in truth  (Continued from page 5)

love perjury, because all these are things that I hate — declares the Lord.” (Zec 8:16–17)

Those verses stopped me in my tracks. What is a more profound message for young people — in fact our entire world — to hear right now? For the next few days all I could think about was how lies and deceit underpin most of the things that ail our world. In fact, the fall of mankind resulted from a lie spewed from the ancient serpent’s mouth.

Think of all that pain that comes from deception, thievery and false witness. It is no accident that Christ refers to enemies of truth as children of the devil, who “does not stand in truth, because there is no truth in him” and is the “father of lies” (John 8:44). When people treat the truth as either unattainable, a joke or only something to be manipulated for a “higher good” we are simply asking for trouble.

Here’s what we can know for sure: Jesus is the way, the truth and the life (John 14:6). In fact, the truth is more important than that. Truth, light and love are crucial in order for human beings to flourish. In this age of relativism, these verses found on the new Dead Sea Scrolls are not only the Word of God, ancient words of wisdom, but also indispensable advice for everyone alive today.

David Cooley is co-director and office manager of the Office of Catechesis and Evangelization.

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Missed an edition? Current and back issues of the Messenger are available online at covdio.org/messenger.
“Francesco” (Discovery+) Filmmaker Evgeny Afineevsky’s portrait of Pope Francis is not a linear biography but a celebration of the pontiff’s efforts to bring the message of human dignity to the world by shining a light into some of the darkest corners of the globe, where political, social, economic and religious injustices have taken — or are still taking — place. From his decision to become a priest, to joining the Jesuits, to becoming the Archbishop of Buenos Aires and a cardinal, Francis, the movie, shows he has been consistent in his action on behalf of others. With a running time just under two hours, the profile is quite long for its genre. As a result, the film fans looking for memorable characters, not so much. Frequent stylized violence, at least one use of profanity, several milder oaths, about a half-dozen crude terms, a couple of crass expressions. CNS: O; MP A: R.

“Godzilla vs. Kong” (Warner Bros.) Visually spectacular but dramatically feeble creature feature from director Adam Wingard. In following up both 2019’s “Godzilla: King of the Monsters” and “Kong: Skull Island” from 2017, screenwriters Eric Pearson and Max Borenstein entangle the titular showdown in the varied strands of interaction among an ensemble cast with the result that the outsized brutes prove a good deal more interesting than the puny humans. The latter include an orphaned deaf girl who has won Kong’s affection, her adoptive mother, a linquist who tries to communicate with the big simian, an eccentric podcaster intent on uncovering shenanigans at a high-tech conglomerate, among an ensemble cast with the result that the outsized brutes prove a good deal more interesting than the puny humans. The latter include an orphaned deaf girl who has won Kong’s affection, her adoptive mother, a linguist who tries to communicate with the big simian, an eccentric podcaster intent on uncovering shenanigans at a high-tech conglomerate, the teen who becomes his protege and a scientist on a quest to reach the center of the earth. Those in search of special effects and crashing skyscrapers will eventually be well satisfied, film fans looking for memorable characters, not so much. Frequent stylized violence, at least one use of profanity, several milder oaths, about a half-dozen crude terms, a couple of crass expressions. CNS: A-III; MP A: PG-13.

“Nobody” (Universal) A mild-mannered suburban family man gets caught up in an escalating cycle of crime and violence after thieves break into his house. What his opponents, who eventual include a Russian mob boss, initially fail to realize, though, is that he is a highly skilled former military operative trying to live an ordinary life. Dark humor abounds in director Ilya Naishuller’s ironic action flick which also features comedy veteran Christopher Lloyd as the protagonist’s dad. But, while the ballet of murderous mayhem over which Naishuller presides is undeniably well-choreographed, the testosterone-soaked theme of Derek Kolstad’s script is the sheer joy of killing for its own sake. Skewed values, excessive gory violence, gruesome images, drug use, several profanities, frequent rough and crude language. CNS: O; MP A: R.

For full reviews of each of these films — go to catholicnews.com and click on “Extras,” then choose “Movies.” Catholic News Service (CNS) classifications are:

- A-I — general patronage;
- A-II — adults and adolescents;
- A-III — adults;
- L — limited adult audience;
- O — morally offensive.

CNS: A-II; MP A: Not rated.

Cathy Allyn and Nick Loeb’s film reveals a few interesting dialogue registers as anything but natural, co-directors script stuffed full of quotations whose appearance in the movie is a distraction. Overly rhetorical and with a primarily religious perspective of prolific abortionist-turned-pro-life-leader Dr. Bernard Nathanson. Among the elements that might have been better developed is the potentially intriguing biography of Dr. Mildred Jefferson, the first Black woman to graduate from Harvard Medical School and a longstanding champion of the unborn. Mature themes, disturbing images, medical gore, a couple of mild oaths. CNS: A-III; MP A: PG-13.

April 16, 2021

MOVIE CAPSULE

Darkest corners of the globe, where political, social, economic and religious injustices have taken — or are still taking — place. From his decision to become a priest, to joining the Jesuits, to becoming the Archbishop of Buenos Aires and a cardinal, Francis, the movie, shows he has been consistent in his action on behalf of others. With a running time just under two hours, the profile is quite long for its genre. As a result, the film fans looking for memorable characters, not so much. Frequent stylized violence, at least one use of profanity, several milder oaths, about a half-dozen crude terms, a couple of crass expressions. CNS: O; MP A: R.

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SHOPPER’S GUIDE

For full reviews of each of these films — go to catholicnews.com and click on “Extras,” then choose “Movies.” Catholic News Service (CNS) classifications are:

- A-I — general patronage;
- A-II — adults and adolescents;
- A-III — adults;
- L — limited adult audience;
- O — morally offensive.

CNS: A-II; MP A: Not rated.

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April is an open month for VIRTUS — keep your account out of quarantine

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month. For those who would like to work or volunteer at schools or parishes in the Diocese of Covington, April is also an opportunity to update and renew their VIRTUS account. As COVID-19 cases continue to decrease, now is the perfect time for volunteers to bring their suspended VIRTUS account out of quarantine by completing missed bulletins so that they will be ready to participate in events as they begin to open up.

During April all suspended VIRTUS accounts are reopened and everyone has the opportunity to go online at VIRTUS.org, catch up on VIRTUS bulletins and be ready to become an active volunteer again. Accounts will remain open until May 4, allowing volunteers to get up-to-date. VIRTUS bulletins must be current to be permitted to work or volunteer in schools or parishes.

The open period is only available to employees and volunteers who have already completed the live VIRTUS training session and whose background check has been completed. Any new volunteers will need to speak to their pastor, pastoral, coach or program organizer about beginning the volunteer certification process.

Visit www.virtus.org and any unread bulletins that need to be processed will be listed. Read the bulletins and answer the question at the end. For information on the diocese’s Safe Environment program, visit www.covdio.org and click on the Safe Environment page.

PACK THE PANTRY BOURBON RAFFLE

All proceeds benefit the NEW Cold Spring Food Pantry.

- Raffle tickets are $20 per ticket with first and second prize winnings!
- Only 500 tickets will be sold.
- Raffle tickets can be purchased online at www.svdpanky.org.
- Raffle ends on April 30, 2021 at 11:30 a.m. with the drawing at 12 p.m. EST at 2655 Crescent Springs Rd., Erlanger, KY 41017.
- Participants must be 21 years of age to enter.
- You need not be present to win.
- Winners will be contacted via email or phone and will be announced on all SVJPNKY social media pages.
National/World

Court overturns California’s pandemic ban on in-home worship for groups

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Supreme Court has ruled in a 5-4 decision that California’s ban on in-home worship for Bible study groups or prayer groups violated the First Amendment’s guarantee of the free exercise of religion. The ruling, issued just before midnight April 9, came in a case brought by a couple of parishioners and others in a Bible study group in Santa Clara County California, against Gov. Gavin Newsom and other state officials. The court barred enforcement of a restriction set to expire April 15. After the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit ruled the law unconstitutional, Newsom’s appeal was dismissed April 9, which struck the high court, which said in its unsigned ruling the 9th Circuit’s failure to grant an injunction while the plaintiffs appealed its ruling “was erroneous.” Based on the merits of the case, the plaintiffs had shown they were “irreparably harmed by the loss of free exercise rights for even minimal periods of time,” the ruling said, adding that the state had not shown that “public health would be imperiled” by using less restrictive measures.”

Five priests, two nuns, three laypeople kidnapped in Haiti

VATICAN CITY — The latest victims of rampant kidnappings in Haiti are five priests, two nuns and three laypeople who were abducted together on their way to a parish near the capital of Port-au-Prince early April 11. Kidnapping cases happen almost daily in Haiti, which has been experiencing increasing insecurity, political turmoil and gang violence; it is the poorest country in the Hemisphere. “This new case is a reflection of the collapse of the security apparatus of the state and the country. No one seems to be safe anymore,” Redemptorist Father Ronald Antoine told Fides, the news agency of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, April 12. “Outlawed groups continue to sow fear and sadness in the hearts of the population,” he said. Father Ludger Maze, secretary of the Haitian bishops’ conference, told Agence France Presse April 12 that the kidnappers had demanded a ransom of $1 million for the release of the priests. The Conference of Haitian Religious issued a statement expressing its “deep regret” over the latest kidnapping, but also its “anger at the inhumane situation we have been going through for more than a decade.” Fides reported. Kidnappings for ransom by armed gangs have increased over the past several months.

Scottish bishops add free speech, thought to Catholic election concerns

GLASGOW, Scotland — The bishops of Scotland have made freedom of speech, expression, thought, conscience and religious activity for Catholic voters for the first time. In a 1,000-word letter issued ahead of the May 6 election, free speech is listed among key categories of concern alongside the protection of human life, family and work, poverty, human trafficking, the environment and Catholic education. “If Scotland is to be a tolerant, open, diverse country than we must be free to discuss and debate issues, even those which are deemed by some to be controversial,” said the letter signed by the seven bishops and the administrator for the Archdiocese of Glasgow. It was released April 11. “Whilst being mindful of the need to protect citizens from hate, government must not overstep into the realm of unjust restrictions on free speech, free expression and freedom of thought, conscience and religion,” the letter said. “This must include, among others, the freedom to express belief in the biological reality of sex and gender.” In March, Scotland passed the Hate Crime and Public Order (Scotland) Bill, which Catholic election leaders have been critical of. They feared a new offence of “stirring up hatred” against certain groups could lead to the prosecution of Christians solely for disagreeing with gender ideology and same-sex marriage or for possessing literature promoting Christian sexual ethics.

London cardinal leads Catholics in mourning death of Prince Philip

MANCHESTER, England — Cardinal Vincent Nichols of Westminster led Catholics of England and Wales in mourning the death of Prince Philip, the husband of Queen Elizabeth II. The president of the Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales issued a statement April 9, soon after the queen announced “with deep sorrow” that her husband of 73 years had died at the age of 99. “At this moment of sadness and loss, I pray for the repose of the soul of Prince Philip, Her Majesty the Queen’s faithful and loving husband,” said Cardinal Nichols in a statement posted on the website of the English and Welsh bishops’ conference. “Prince Philip was a man of the queen and all of the royal family,” he said. “How much we will miss Prince Philip’s presence and character; so full of life and vigor. He has been an example of steadfast loyalty and duty generously given. May he rest in peace.” Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Vatican secretary of state, sent a message of condolences to Queen Elizabeth, saying “Pope Francis offers heartfelt condolences to your majesty and the members of the royal family.”

Cardinal unveils major Vatican conference on priesthood slated for 2022

VATICAN CITY — The Vatican is convening a major conference on priesthood, improving the way laypeople and priests work together and ensuring that service, not power, motivates the request for ordination are all possible outcomes of a major symposium being planned by the Vatican in February 2022. “A theological symposium does not claim to offer practical solutions to all the pastoral and missionary problems of the Church, but it can help us deepen the foundation of the Church’s mission,” said Cardinal Marc Ouellet, prefect of the Congregation for Bishops and the chief organizer of the symposium planned for Feb. 17-19, 2022. The symposium, “Toward a Fundamental Theology of the Priesthood,” seeks to encourage an understanding of ministerial priesthood and the place of women in the Church.”

Cardinals mobilize to help evacuees from La Soufrière volcano

PORT-OF-SPAIN, Trinidad — Despite COVID-19 restrictions and various challenges posed by continuous volcanic eruptions and ashfall on St. Vincent and the Grenadines and neighboring islands, dioceses in the West Indies have rallied to the aid of the islanders. The three-day gathering, the cardinal said, is aimed specifically at bishops and delegations of theologians and vocations personnel from every country, although it will be open to other theologians and people interested in the topic. The relationship between baptism and ordained ministry needs greater emphasis today, Cardinal Ouellet said, but reviewing the foundations of a theology of priesthood also “involves ecumenical questions not to be ignored, as well as the cultural movements that question the place of women in the Church.”

Kenyan bishops urge government to keep refugee camps for now

NAIROBI, Kenya — Catholic bishops in Kenya are urging the government to shelve plans to close two refugee camps in the north, which host refugees who fled civil war and famine in Somalia and South Sudan. The bishops’ appeal came after the government ordered the U.N. Refugee Agency to close Dadaab and Kakuma refugee camps in northern Kenya within 14 days. The two camps host a total of 450,000 people, including a small number from South Sudan. “It is highly unfortunate and regrettable that the intention by Kenyan authorities to close Dadaab and Kakuma refugee camps within a short time frame comes at a time that these people need help,” said Archbishop Philip Anyolo, chairman of the Kenya Conference of Catholic Bishops. “This is the time to give protection and ensure the safety of the most vulnerable in our society.” He wants the government to shelve the decision, increase security for the refugees and treat them with care during the coronavirus pandemic. Archbishop Anyolo said hosting the refugees has been a good gesture, necessary, important and human to support the most vulnerable in the society. He said the refugees’ lives had been disrupted by various reasons, including effects of climate change and insecurity. “Forcefully returning refugees to Somalia, where there are already mass movements of people, cannot be justified and is against the suffering of vulnerable women and children,” Archbishop Anyolo said, calling for a comprehensive approach to solve Kenya’s complex refugee problem.
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